The Genus Hesperia. (*With two plates.*)

By T. A. CHAPMAN, M.D., F.R.S.

(*Continued from vol. xxix., p. 145.*)

Various circumstances, of which questions of paper and printing have not been the least, have interfered with the continuation of this exposition of the European Hesperias, founded on Dr. Reverdin's Revision in the *Études de Lépidoptérologie comparée*, Fasc. xii.

I now offer the plates of the undersides of imagines, that ought strictly to have appeared with the last portion. These are those of five species of the *cacaliae* group and *H. antonia* for comparison with *H. sidae*. These reproductions from Mr. Tonge's photographs are rather pale and weak, and not so satisfactory as those in pl. ix. of vol. 29. Still they show the forms and dispositions of the markings.

These have been already dealt with, so that it is unnecessary to go over the same ground again.

In the photographs of *H. sidae* and *H. antonia* the two species do not look so much alike as the actual specimens do. The orange in *antonia* is yellower than in *sidae*. The effect is a difference in the photographic values that does not strike one at all strongly in the insects themselves, the orange in *sidae* comes out as very much darker than that of *antonia* does, so that the photographs make the differences between the two species quite obvious. In the insects themselves the feature of both having orange bands that we hardly expect in Hesperias, impresses one with the resemblances and obscures the differences.

The male appendages of *H. sidae* and *H. antonia* show that they belong to very different sections of the genus.

Varietal and Aberrational Nomenclature. A Protest.

By GEORGE WHEELER, M.A., F.Z.S., F.E.S.

I feel impelled to write a few lines of friendly but emphatic protest against the position taken up by my colleagues, Dr. Chapman and Mr. Donisthorpe, in our July issue (pp. 124, 125), with regard to racial and aberrational nomenclature. Their contention is summed up in the following words written by Dr. Chapman and quoted, apparently with approval, by Mr. Donisthorpe.

"Staudinger uses the formula *var. et ab.*, *i.e.*, giving the same name to a race that had been given to an ab. This cannot be sound, whatever any authorities may say.

"I assert that a 'race' differs from the typical race if it is geographically distinguishable, but as regards forms represented, need not differ more than by having the several forms in different proportions to those that are present in the type, *i.e.*, all forms in the one may be present in the other, but in different proportions."

I cannot imagine a piece of reasoning more unsound, nor a practice which, if followed out, would be more calculated to cause confusion, and to produce a burdensome and quite unnecessary addition to the already somewhat superabundant list of varietal and aberrational names. The only purpose of a name is to make the object named recognisable without a description (as Mr. Donisthorpe allows when quoting with marked approval Lord Rothschild's paper on the subject),

and has nothing whatever to do with the numbers or the proportion to other forms in which the object named may be found. (For instance, an arm-chair is an arm-chair, whether it occurs in the lounge of a Club where it is the dominant form, or as the seat of the President at the meetings of the Entomological Society, where it is a unique aberration.) I hold no brief for Staudinger's Catalogue, and probably few people have spoken or written stronger criticisms upon it than I have, but I am convinced that his expression "*var. et ab.*" is entirely correct, for it is well known to everyone, and the fact is referred to by Dr. Chapman in the passage quoted above, that any form of a species which is racial in any locality is liable to appear as an aberration in others where the dominant form is different, and the same name must apply to all insects of the same facies wherever they come from and in whatever proportions they may happen to be found. Let us follow out the opposite suggestion and see where it *must* and where it *might* land us. The blue ♀ of *Agriades coridon* appears in many places as an occasional aberration and is called ab. *syngrapha;* the corresponding form of *A. thetis*, which appears in the same way, is known as ab. *ceronus;* but in some parts of the French department of Charente Inférieure the blue form of the ♀ of both these species is racial; we must not then use the aberrational names *syngrapha* and *ceronus* for these races, and are at once confronted with two new extra names, and shall have an aberrational and a racial name for absolutely identical insects, and furthermore shall never know, unless we possess exact locality data, by which name we are to call any given specimen of the form. In the case of *Lycaena arion* matters would be far worse. There are a number of named racial forms of this species, most of which turn up as occasional aberrations in other localities, so that the type form may appear in one locality as an aberration of the racial form *ligurica*, in another as an aberration of the racial form *arcina*, in another of *laranda*, etc., etc., etc., and for each of these it ought logically to have a different name, in order that we may know of which racial form it is an individual aberration; and to this would be added new names for each of these local races when they appeared as aberrational forms in the areas where others were dominant. These are merely typical instances representative of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of others. The proposition indeed has only to be stated thus to carry its own refutation. The only alternative is the simple and natural conception of a name as applicable to any and every insect (or other object) of the form to which the name was originally applied, quite independently of the proportion in which the form may appear, the fact that it is aberrational in any given locality being sufficiently notified by the prefix "ab.," which can be omitted in writing or speaking of a locality where it is racial.

Lampronia quadripunctella, Fab., and its aberrations.

By ALFRED SICH, F.E.S.

Lampronia quadripunctella is a dusky moth with pale spots. It varies greatly in the number of spots present on the forewing. This variation has prevented some authors from understanding the descrip-